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SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

STATE OF WISCONSIN
One-Stop Profile

March 1996

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During December 1995

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DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT

The state of Wisconsin has come into the One-Stop demonstration with a well-developed approach that has been extensively piloted in a number of local sites over the past ten years. Local One-Stop service sites, called *Job Centers*, have been conceptualized since 1987. The USDOL One-Stop implementation grant is supporting Wisconsin's efforts to accelerate and expand upon the One-Stop approach statewide.

There are many contextual variables that have influenced, and continue to influence, One-Stop planning, design, implementation, and progress in the state of Wisconsin. The primary federal-level influence is clearly the prospective change from multiple funding streams to the consolidation of workforce development programs under block grants. Developed as a system to promote *service coordination* in the context of multiple categorical programs, Wisconsin's One-Stop approach is expected to evolve more rapidly toward *service integration* once federal block grant legislation is passed.

At the state level, there are numerous contextual variables influencing One-Stop implementation and progress, three of which appear to be key: 1) the merger between two major state agencies; 2) a controversial welfare reform initiative that eliminates AFDC; and 3) state legislation requiring the realignment of SDA boundaries. These influences, singularly and in tandem, represent strong challenges for the state, but are generally believed to be supportive of the statewide One-Stop initiative. Each is briefly described below.

- The merger between the Department of Industry, Labor & Human Relations (DILHR) and the Department of Health & Social Services (DH&SS), scheduled to be effective 7/1/96, will create a new Department of Workforce Development. This major organizational change represents a consolidation of key One-Stop players. In the long run, consolidation should enhance One-Stop coordination efforts by unifying the entities responsible for school-to-work, welfare-to-work, vocational rehabilitation, and JTPA, ES, and UI programs under the leadership of a single state agency. In the short run, the magnitude of these organizational changes has caused uncertainty about exactly how agency policies and staff functions will be affected by consolidation.

- The state of Wisconsin has long been active in welfare reform initiatives, testing various approaches through federal waivers to the AFDC program. The state's newest welfare reform proposal, called *Wisconsin Works* or *W-2*, would replace welfare grants to employable individuals with a system of services designed to encourage immediate attachment to the labor force. This highly controversial initiative is still being designed and debated in the state legislature. Regardless of its eventual form, the welfare reform initiative is expected to increase greatly the demands made on the state's workforce development service system. The state is committed to using its Job Center system for delivery of employment-related services to *W-2* participants as part of a "Partnership for Full Employment."

- A bill currently before the state legislature recommends the realignment of local workforce development planning areas from 17 (the current number of SDAs) to a smaller number, perhaps 10. Although reducing the number of SDAs is believed to be facilitative of the One-Stop initiative (e.g., increasing administrative efficiency in response to decreasing resources), the proposed shift would necessitate substantial reorganization among local planning teams that have already made significant strides to develop collaborative partnerships and design coordinated services within the current planning areas.

It is within this environment of uncertainty amidst substantial changes that Wisconsin is striving to support the creation of coordinated local workforce development systems. Although the state wants to provide effective guidance in the development of local One-Stop systems, it has declined to prescribe a standardized design for local Job Centers to follow, for several reasons. First, state One-Stop policymakers feel that the federal program environment is still too uncertain to make final decisions about what One-Stop systems should look like. Second, the state is committed to offering substantial latitude for local discretion so that the local designs for the statewide system "percolate from the front line." According to the state's vision, services that respond to customer "needs" or "demands" should be the primary consideration that drives local design variants. As a result, the state has developed only a general blueprint for what a local Job Center should look and feel like—the *Job Center Standards* (described later). The state has also undertaken state-level projects in the areas of capacity building, customer satisfaction, cost allocation, facilities, and marketing to support local One-Stop design and implementation efforts.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

State-Level Organization and Governance

The entity with oversight over all workforce development programs is the *State Human Resources Investment Council* (HRIC), established by state law in December, 1994. Although similar in structure and function to the former governing body — the State Job Training Coordinating Council, called the "Wisconsin Jobs Council" — the HRIC was established to be more comprehensive in scope and include top-level agency administrators, as well as to be responsive to DOL's One-Stop Solicitation for Grant Application (SGA). The 30-member HRIC consists of three working committees, each devoted to a different set of issues and challenges. Plans are currently underway to restructure the HRIC into a smaller *Council on Workforce Excellence.*

The *State Collaborative Planning Team* (SCPT), established in 1989, is a state-level interagency team that guides the One-Stop effort in Wisconsin. This team consists of middle and upper-level managers from all of the nine One-Stop partner agencies. The role of the State Collaborative Planning Team is to advise the HRIC on One-Stop implementation and progress. (This structure is mirrored at the local level with Local Collaborative Planning Teams that guide local One-Stop plan development.) The state partner agencies involved in Wisconsin's One-Stop effort are:

1. *Department of Industry, Labor & Human Relations* (DILHR), which is responsible for JTPA, ES, Labor Market Information, and Apprenticeship programs, through its Jobs, Employment & Training (JETS) Division, as well as UI, and School-to-Work programs (through its Office of Workforce Excellence).

2. *Department of Health & Social Services* (DH&SS), which has responsibility for the JOBS program for AFDC recipients, the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program, through a separate VR division.

3. *Wisconsin Technical College System Board,* which sets policy and coordinates across 16 autonomous technical college districts that have their own taxing authority and are primarily responsible for post-secondary and vocational education.

4. *Department of Public Instruction* (DPI), which has authority over K-12 education.

5. *Educational Approval Board.*

6. *Department of Veterans' Affairs.*

7. *Department of Development*, which is responsible for economic development programs and initiatives.

8. *Department of Corrections*.

By virtue of the historical context, administrative authority, or responsibility for specific funding streams, some One-Stop partner agencies have more prominence and day-to-day operational involvement than others. Thus, although the state's One-Stop initative represents a partnership among these agencies, DILHR's role is prominent because it is responsible for a number of the programs mandated for inclusion in the One-Stop initiative (e.g., JTPA, ES, LMI, Appenticeship, and UI), has been experimenting with similar initiatives for several years, and is responsible for administration of the USDOL One-Stop implementation grant through its JETS Division. In addition, notwithstanding the general spirit of collaboration among all partners, three key players bring major funding streams to the effort: DILHR, DH&SS (soon to be merged with DILHR) and the Technical College System. (These three key partners at the state level mirror the mandatory "core partners" at the local level, as described later.)

Each partner agency brings to the One-Stop effort a unique program culture and set of operating principles. The need to cultivate this broad range of partnerships while respecting differences in the cultures, missions, and perspectives of participating agencies has been a challenge. Some agencies, for instance, by virtue of their mission, target services to a particular population segment. Others focus more on services to the general public. Moreover, some partner agencies are smaller in size as well as scope, are "non-mandated" partners, and have struggled with "being heard."

By and large, the challenge of dealing with this "multi-culturalism" has been met by state efforts to maintain clear and open communication across and within agencies and involve all actors on interagency teams and workgroups. One-Stop partner agencies are learning to work together, sometimes struggling, but moving forward as norms and other behavioral guidelines are established, either formally or informally. Partner agencies are beginning to recognize that, over time, state agencies' roles within the One-Stop system may evolve as partners focus more upon their core competencies, and thereby add value to the overall system. Thus, some agencies are experiencing — and probably will continue to experience — a redefinition or reshaping of roles and responsibilities, particularly in cases where agencies have traditionally focused on a particular segment of the population.

State Framework for Local Governance

The framework for local governance is similar to that in place at the state level. *Local Collaborative Planning Teams* (LCPTs) are the local planning structures guiding local One-Stop efforts and consisting of representatives from each local partner agency. Indeed, a critical stage of local-level implementation of the Job Center initiative in the state of Wisconsin was the formation of the LCPT in each of the 17 current SDAs. Formed initially to develop "core coordination documents" describing the coordination of programs and services within each local planning area, LCPTs are responsible for planning how to expend the majority of funding received under Wisconsin's federal One-Stop Implementation grant.

In addition, local policy boards — called *Human Resource Investment Boards* (HRIBs) — are expected to be in place by January 1997. Although many of the specific elements are yet to be determined (e.g., required composition of the boards, whether boards will play an administrative or merely a policy guidance role with respect to local Job Centers), the primary purpose of the HRIBs will be to ensure that One-Stop customers and investors (i.e., individual job seeking customers, employers, and taxpayers) have a voice in the development of the local One-Stop system and that customer feedback is used to improve Job Center system performance. The state's vision is that these local boards will not deliver services directly. Instead, they will provide policy direction to, and conduct strategic planning for, the local One-Stop Job Center system. In general, local boards will have oversight responsibility for the same programs locally that the state Council on Workforce Excellence will oversee on a statewide basis.

Local governance has emerged as a politically-charged issue and a key challenge for the state. One of the reasons for the volatility of the issue is probably related to the fact that HRIBs are being planned *after,* rather than *before,* the development of LCPTs and local One-Stop centers. Therefore, as latecomers to the local planning process, the HRIBs may be seen as a potentially destabilizing influence on local interagency partnerships that have evolved up to this point. In addition, although HRIBs are expected to perform a strategic planning function within a framework devised by the state Council on Workforce Excellence, the details of the relationship between state and local governance boards is not yet clear.

The state has responded to the tension surrounding the issue of local governance by soliciting local input through a *Local Dialogue* process that took place from July

1995 through September 1995. Each local area received funding to sponsor formal dialogues, providing a forum for discussions pertaining to the possible structure, composition and oversight responsibilities of the HRIB. A report on these meetings was discussed by the State HRIC in December 1995. Due to the complexity and sensitive nature of local governance issues and the uncertainty surrounding federal legislation, recommendations on HRIBs were postponed until May 1996. Presently, the State HRIC is considering a number of different models for the proposed HRIBs. Both state and local One-Stop actors agree that the best-case scenario would have been the establishment of local governing boards or the consolidation of existing disparate ones earlier in the One-Stop implementation process.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

The primary method to establish and maintain open lines of communication and facilitate ongoing coordination between and among state-level partners is the use of teams, in which broad-based participation is the norm. This starts at the top with the State Collaborative Planning Team, which has representation from all of the partner agencies, ensuring each a voice in One-Stop planning and implementation. In addition, numerous interagency teams focus on particular functions related to the One-Stop initiative, such as Capacity Building, Marketing, and Technology Initiatives, each described later. Local One-Stop actors are usually represented on these interagency functional teams as well, since local input is placed at a premium. The information generated from the various teams is, in turn, provided to the "Job Center Team," which coordinates the implementation of specific actions related to each topic area. Although state-level partners have generally found the level of interagency coordination and cooperation facilitative and, in some cases, "awesome," there is growing awareness that an increasing number of workgroups and teams could become counterproductive.

Communication between state and local One-Stop staff makes use of several different channels. Broad-based state and local participation on various planning workgroups is one way of keeping communication channels open and soliciting local input. Statewide and regional meetings and conferences have also taken place to discuss One-Stop design and implementation issues and share information about local variants of the One-Stop approach. Moreover, another means of communicating with local Job Centers is through state "Local Liaisons," each responsible for a particular territory. The Local Liaisons identify One-Stop implementation problems, provide

technical assistance resources, and work closely with local areas during the process of local One-Stop design and implementation. Information obtained by the Local Liaisons also flows to the Job Center Team.

The staff manager of the One-Stop Implementation Grant within DILHR's JETS Division also circulates "Information Memos" to Local Collaborative Planning Team leads to share information about One-Stop developments at the state level. Information Memos cover a range of issues from responses to questions that have been asked, to information about new issues that are arising. Although the information in these memos is presented in a conversational and informative way and appears to go to key local One-Stop actors, the Waukesha respondents indicated that there are some problems in getting information to the field in a timely manner.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

The initial investments to pilot a comprehensive and seamless workforce development service system in Wisconsin were made with state general revenue funds. Other major funding sources used to support the development of different aspects of the One-Stop system include several ES Automation Grants (largely responsible for the creation of JobNet, the state's automated labor exchange system) and a five-year $27M School-to-Work grant. Therefore, although the USDOL One-Stop implementation grant represents a significant source of funding that has indeed acted as a catalyst for Job Center implementation statewide, it is only one of a number of funding sources contributing to the One-Stop system and supporting structures, initiatives and products.

The state received a first-year One-Stop implementation grant of $3.5M, and a first-year separate LMI grant of over $400,000. It has been the state's intention to use One-Stop grant monies for the most "prudent" types of activities — activities that would not be funded otherwise — with the lion's share of the state's implementation grant (i.e., over 70%) being allocated to local areas in the form of: (1) local implementation grants (allocated to all local planning areas based upon the size of the civilian labor force), (2) local governance/transition grants to support the creation of a local Human Resource Investment Board, and (3) local pilot projects (competitively awarded based on local innovations). As a result of receiving less funding than expected (30% less than the $5M requested), the budgets for several planned areas, including information systems and the three types of local grants, were reduced.

Because the state decided to allocate the majority of One-Stop Implementation Grant funds to Local Collaborative Planning Teams on a planning year basis, with an initial 12-month implementation period of July 1, 1995 through June 30, 1996, the expenditure rate has been slow. It is expected that spending rates in the latter part of the implementation period will increase.

In addition, as a result of the myriad organizational changes that have been taking place — partly a result of the One-Stop restructuring and partly a result of other factors such as federal or state program cuts — several partner agencies have experienced staffing reductions. For example, local JTPA administrators, who are often key partners on local collaborative planning teams, have sometimes found it difficult to carry out both One-Stop planning and conduct of their program-specific responsibilities as a result of reductions in overall program funding. Similarly, ongoing budget cuts within the federal ES program have resulted in a series of staffing cutbacks within state and local Job Service operations. Indeed, one of the original incentives for self-service methods of delivery in Job Centers was the high level of staff reductions throughout the Job Service. In some cases, state-and local-level staff reductions have necessitated either putting off One-Stop development activities (e.g., the state-level marketing effort for the One-Stop implementation grant was temporarily postponed when several state-level communications staff were let go), or coming up with ways to do more with less.

Although seeking a high degree of coordination is a clearly established norm among state agency partners, efforts to implement a One-Stop system have been undertaken without efforts to consolidate individual program funding streams. Because of a view that fiscal accountability requires the maintenance of separate funding streams, state agency partners in Wisconsin have not negotiated cost-sharing, cost-pooling, or similar arrangements. Each agency charges its activities to its own program funds. Partners generally believed that until federal funds were provided to states in the form of block grants, true integration of services through consolidation of funding would be thwarted by the need to account for each funding stream using different rules and requirements.

This was also the case in the local site visited. Different partners with different reporting requirements were not eager to merge funds from different sources to support integrated service delivery designs. And, in terms of following the guidance offered in DOL's Cost Allocation TAG, it was believed that, although the TAG was an excellent

piece of work technically, following the principles and practices espoused in the TAG would place local areas at risk, particularly for expenditures from non-DOL funds. The financial liability and potential for disallowed costs were perceived to be so prohibitive that local areas would avoid any new way of allocating costs "like the plague."

At the time of the site visit, the state was participating in discussions with a few local areas (not visited by the research team) about undertaking pilots to test the cost-sharing approaches described in the Cost Allocation TAG. However, the state described these sites as facing difficulties because of the fact that in Wisconsin the One-Stop initiative pertains to numerous agencies and programs beyond DOL, which have not necessarily approved the approaches recommended. In general, it is believed that the cost allocation practices described in the TAG are best designed to deal with fully integrated service delivery approaches, which local sites are reluctant to pursue prior to the implementation of workforce development block grants. As a result, a wait-and-see stance with respect to cost allocation issues and practices has been adopted by many key players.

An issue of particular interest to the numerous One-Stop stakeholders nationwide is the issue of cost savings or prospective cost savings resulting from the establishment of a One-Stop service delivery system. Although there are clearly areas in which cost savings have been experienced in the state of Wisconsin (e.g., increasing the emphasis on self-service access by job seekers to automated job listings has reduced the need for field staff to support job search activities), the fluidity and dynamism of the current environment and the embryonic nature of One-Stop system-level accountability procedures makes assessing the level of cost savings difficult at best. Whereas the need to identify cost savings and to demonstrate cost-effectiveness is perceived as important at the state level and early pilot efforts identified specific overhead savings, it was strongly believed that it would be difficult to measure cost reductions or to place a specific dollar value on the increased benefits in terms of the improved quality of customer services.

DESIGN OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of State Design

The One-Stop initiative in the state of Wisconsin represents a work-in-progress that can be traced back nearly a decade. The framework that materialized in 1990 for a more efficient and effective service delivery system was predicated upon the desire to

increase the level of coordination among key funding streams: Wagner-Peyser, JTPA, JOBS, Vocational Education, and Adult Education. (Although the School-to-Work initiative in Wisconsin is housed within DILHR, the One-Stop initiative and the School-to-Work initiative have developed along independent but parallel paths.) Based upon this early vision of a coordinated service delivery system, the state council at the time promoted the "Job Center" concept, secured state funding for local pilots, involved local areas in the planning process, and established local structures called Local Collaborative Planning Teams to develop local coordination plans. Coordinating these funding streams required the involvement of four key partners at the local level (which still represent the required minimum core partners) — the PIC or JTPA administrative entity, the local Job Service, the JOBS administrative entity, and the local Technical College District.

In its initial efforts to develop a seamless and comprehensive workforce development system, the state identified five specific activities and services believed to be common across all programs: intake, assessment, case management, employer services, and interagency areawide planning. Therefore, local Job Centers were built upon interagency practices that unify these five functions. The state established "benchmarks" for each function to guide local areas in their development of customer-oriented delivery systems.. These benchmarks evolved into Wisconsin's *Job Center Standards*, widely considered to be the backbone of the state's design for the One-Stop system.

Wisconsin's input into the federal One-Stop design resulted in a fair degree of congruence between Wisconsin's efforts in these five functional areas and what USDOL ultimately proposed as "minimum core services" to be delivered through a One-Stop system. The state expanded the scope of its Job Center Standards to include DOL core services (e.g., labor market information and job search training and assistance), thereby aligning the state and federal visions. The Job Center Standards, discussed more fully in a later section, have continued to evolve and shape the design framework for Wisconsin's One-Stop system, guiding local operations.

The One-Stop effort in the state of Wisconsin is perceived, above all else, as an organizational and structural means to the end of improved customer services. According to the One-Stop manager within Wisconsin's DILHR, the One-Stop system represents the infrastructure — a store with shelves, a loading dock, cash registers and such. At present, the contents of the shelves are defined by different state and local

program initiatives, funding streams, and specified target groups (e.g., JTPA, local School-to-Work initiatives). Notwithstanding this metaphor, the state's conceptual framework for a local One-Stop system calls for a network consisting of:

- At least two full-service Job Centers in most SDAs;

- "Other staffed service locations" tied to Job Centers by various means (e.g., formal two-way referral, electronic communication linkages);

- "Self-service sites" at a variety of high traffic public access sites in the community; and

- An information technology infrastructure based on state-sponsored designs adapted to local needs.

According to the state's vision, no single agency or program will own or run any local Job Center. Rather, each Job Center is to be run by a consortium — a "partnership of equals" — that includes the four core partners at a minimum. Implicit in this rather broad design framework is the latitude for local discretion and the recognition of differences across local areas. Indeed, local flexibility and discretion are perceived as key design elements, facilitating responsiveness to local customer needs. Each local One-Stop center is encouraged to develop services and structures tailored to the needs of local employer and job seeker customers beyond the core services and within the state's functional framework using either co-location or a "no wrong-door" approach to coordinate among local partners and their programs. Local areas, however, have most often perceived co-location as a necessary (though not a sufficient) condition for efficient and effective Job Center operations.

Relevance of the State Design to the Four Federal Goals
Universal Access

The state anticipates that the federal goal of the *Universality* of One-Stop services will be achieved as all employers and individuals come to view Job Centers as the vehicle of choice for all workforce development needs. While offering services to economically disadvantaged customers and other "target groups," the system will endeavor to avoid a "welfare-system" image. There is a difference of emphasis among different One-Stop partners, however, between making services available to the general public and developing services to meet the needs of specific target groups. According to the state's One-Stop vision and design, all customers will have access to a set of core services available free of charge, including access to *Job Net,* an automated listing of job openings, *Career Visions,* an automated career information delivery system, and

resource libraries offering a broad range of print and multi-media materials providing labor market, career, and job information. Non-program-eligible customers may be required to pay for some services beyond a set of core services. Whereas fee-for-service arrangements are believed to be one strategy to make a wider range of services available to the general public, procedures for fee-based services are still in the early stages of development.

This was also the case in the local site visited. Therefore, although there is wide recognition that services in a One-Stop environment must be universally available, there is not yet a clear strategy for how to provide a broad range of services to individuals not eligible for specific categorical programs.

Customer Choice

Improved customer choice is one of the key goals of the state's One-Stop initiative. By allowing each local Job Center to design a service delivery system that is tailored to local needs, the state hopes to offer each customer a choice among attractive service options. The primary response to the federal One-Stop objective of *Customer Choice* has been the development of self-service as well as assisted service options. The state has taken the lead with respect to developing the infrastructure to support the former and provided guidance to local areas with respect to the latter. All partners agree that technology-driven, user-directed services such as automated job banks and career information software are essential to make services available to large numbers of employers and individuals. Both state and local respondents agree that the objective of both the technology-driven self-service options and assisted-service options is to increase the service choices available to One-Stop customers. However, while state One-Stop partners tend to emphasize the importance of the self-service systems as a key element of the One-Stop service delivery approach, local One-Stop partners in Waukesha perceived the "personal" assisted services provided by Job Center staff as the key to providing services responsive to customer needs.

Integrated Services

There is a clear desire to move toward *Integrated Services* in terms of service planning and delivery across workforce development programs. Indeed, this is a primary reason why the state has required local Job Centers to be operated by an interagency "partnership of equals" that, together, develops a plan for the design and delivery of services. At present, statewide One-Stop system integration in Wisconsin is built around the five common functions previously referenced (i.e., intake, assessment,

case management, employer services, and planning). It is expected that partner agencies will minimize service duplication and maximize the resources available for customer service by sharing common service functions and infrastructures.

Although integration is a clear goal of the state's One-Stop system, in practice there is actually a *continuum of integration,* ranging from coordination among distinct programs, to consolidation of activities or services across programs. Without the implementation of federal block grants, it is believed that individual programs will maintain their own separate identities and complete integration of services will be unlikely. These beliefs were echoed at the local site visited. In the current multi-program and multi-funding stream environment, the local site visited for the evaluation had progressed to widespread "coordination" of functions across all program activities, but had stopped short of service integration.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

At the present time, the *Job Center Standards* represent a primary mechanism through which the state is cultivating a performance-driven/outcome-based One-Stop system. This series of process standards, representing the culmination of several years of planning efforts, were developed by a state-local interagency team and were approved by the HRIC in February 1995. The standards describe the characteristics of a well-coordinated local employment and training service delivery system (*functional standards*) and identify the minimum menu of services that all Job Center sites are expected to provide on-site to a universal customer base that includes individuals and employers (*service standards*). Thus, the Job Center Standards consist of functional standards pertaining to *how* specific services are delivered, as well as service standards pertaining to *what* specific services are available. For example, one service standard is that testing and assessment be available to a universal customer base; one functional standard is that assessment be non-redundant across participating partners.

In order for a local area to be considered a One-Stop Job Center, it must be in conformance with the standards. A current priority for the state is field-testing an evaluation guide, developed in-house, in order to assess whether and to what extent local Job Centers are meeting their Job Center Standards.

In addition to the Job Center Standards themselves, the state's One-Stop design framework includes the expectation that information about processes, outcomes, and customer satisfaction will guide continuous improvement efforts and that such data will

also be used to certify local One-Stop centers, generate incentive awards, and trigger other consequences. An extensive program of statewide customer-focused research targeted to samples of job-seeker customers, employer customers, and Wisconsin taxpayers is currently underway. The identification and measurement of quantitative outcome-oriented goals, however, is much more rudimentary in nature and represents a challenging area with which the state has just begun to deal.   State respondents expressed a desire to develop *feasible* and *valid* outcome measures for the One-Stop system. However, partner agencies are approaching the issue of specific One-Stop outcome measures with caution and trepidation, borne perhaps of past experiences with numbers that are easily manipulated, quantitative measurements that actually possess minimal utility but which make for pithy sound-bites, and the strong belief that specific quantitative measurements are premature in a system that is very much in a stage of development. At the time of this writing, the state had procured a consultant to assist the One-Stop players in working through these and similar issues.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

The state has placed a high priority on capacity building and related projects to support Wisconsin's implementation of a statewide One-Stop system. The effort is supported by a three-year budget of more than $300,000 from the federal One-Stop implementation grant. As in other supportive initiatives and projects, DILHR's JETS Division is leading the effort and facilitating partner agency involvement on an interagency "Capacity Building Team," which has responsibility for assessing the training needs of all One-Stop partners and developing a training response. Currently, the state is approaching capacity building in a strategic manner, working toward establishing a capacity building *structure*.

The majority of work in this area has revolved around surveying state and local One-Stop actors to identify training needs.   A recent survey identified *team building* and *customer service* as priority training areas for 1996. The state has also conducted surveys specifically targeted to local One-Stop actors to identify and develop a roster of training resources and to gain input regarding what local sites are doing to meet their "functional" Job Center Standards. The goal of these efforts is to complete a job/task analysis that will lead to the identification of key competencies of all local Job Center staff based on the functional standards with a SCANS overlay (e.g., identifying listening skills that are part of the intake process). An automated needs assessment tool

has been developed for use by over 2000 local Job Center staff statewide. Results from the first assessment of Job Center staff will be used to develop curricula so that, in the near future, local One-Stop staff and managers would have access to a broad menu of training options and could register for training relevant to specific key competencies they would like to improve.

In terms of more immediate needs or specific technical assistance, "Local Liaisons" play a key role. Employed by DILHR to interface with local One-Stop actors, the two Local Liaisons are in a position to identify resources and assess immediate needs for assistance. This information is transmitted to the Capacity Building Team, which also provides "just-in-time" training when needed (e.g., conflict resolution training to help a local site deal with tensions among partners).

One-Stop respondents at the local site recognized the state's need to concentrate its energies on soliciting input and collecting various types of information in order to establish a foundation for future capacity building efforts. However, a conflict existed between planning for an ongoing capacity building structure and addressing the immediate needs of local areas during the early stages of One-Stop design and implementation.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

State-level One-Stop actors view labor market information (LMI) and information technology (IT) from a highly comprehensive perspective, one that views IT as the infrastructure that supports the LMI content that drives both workforce development planning and individual customer service. According to this view, which is promoted by ALMIS (America's Labor Market Information System), LMI includes both general information about local education and career opportunities and data on individual labor market transactions (information on individual job seekers and available job openings). When viewed in this way, LMI improvement is actually the linchpin of the entire One-Stop system. State respondents generally believed it would be beneficial if LMI was viewed nationally as an integral part of the One-Stop initiative, rather than as an independent but related initiative.

An "intense" challenge for LMI-related initiatives in the context of a One-Stop service delivery system is the need to make products and technology useful and customer-friendly. One of the ways the state has responded is to modify or develop new products/technology to meet the needs of different types of customers (e.g.,

dislocated workers and dropouts). Despite these efforts, which have included a series of focus groups and the conduct of numerous customer surveys, system design is still a formidable issue, particularly in terms of accommodating systems to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, the general belief that "technology" will solve any and all difficult or menacing tasks places unrealistic expectations upon a system that is already reeling from a lack of national investment amidst demands from numerous layers of customers.

Two major information technology products support Wisconsin's vision of a One-Stop service delivery system: *Career Visions* and *JobNet. Career Visions* is the state's automated Career Information Delivery System (or CIDS), the major vehicle for the electronic delivery of self-service career exploration and decision-making information for individuals. It is a multimedia career exploration and information database accessed through a user interface produced by the University of Wisconsin, and consisting of three major databases (occupations, colleges and universities, and programs of study). This enjoyable and relatively easy to use system is perceived to be geared more for youth in grades 7 through12 than adults (the major market is the public school system). Although the state's original LMI grant was reduced, combining the available funding with Wisconsin's UI profiling grant allowed the state to implement Career Visions in 60 Job Centers or affiliated sites.

JobNet, developed in-house chiefly through ES Automation grants, provides job seekers with information on job openings submitted by employers. JobNet is a PC-based, self-service, touch-screen customer information system. Customers can register for services and obtain information on available local and state job openings. In actuality, JobNet is a primary means of retooling and reengineering Wisconsin's Job Service. The goal for JobNet installations is 72 sites by July 1996, with 45 sites achieved as of March 1996.

In addition to these two primary LMI products, which the federal One-Stop implementation grant is helping the state to "roll out" to local Job Centers, the federal One-Stop grants are also supporting additional Information Technology (IT) projects to further Wisconsin's vision of a statewide One-Stop system. One project is designed to develop a "universal menu of services" for all Job Centers. Called the "*Menu of Services Project,*" the expectation is that individuals will be able to review, select, and automatically register for a locally programmed menu of services on-line. Current plans are to implement this project on a pilot basis using JobNet as the host system.

Among the planned capabilities of this system is the ability to assess initial eligibility for some services. The state plans to conduct an initial pilot of this project, and, if the customer response is positive, implement the menu of services approach statewide.

Another IT project is the establishment of information-sharing linkages across data systems, called the "*IT Blueprint Project.*" In the short-term, project completion will prevent the need for duplicative data entry and facilitate inter-program sharing of information to support the case management function. In the longer-term, the completed "blueprint" will guide state and local IT development to ensure state-local connectivity and compatibility while encouraging local refinements and innovations.

Further IT projects carried out with the federal LMI grants associated with One-Stop include the creation of an automated LMI data "warehouse" to allow easier access and manipulation of multiple LMI datasets by LMI staff. The Occupational Information System (OIS) will permit education and E&T program planners to compile information from multiple sources on labor shortages and surpluses and show the relationships between educational preparation and occupations.

Marketing

Marketing is viewed as critical to the success of the One-Stop initiative — marketing to individual job seekers, the general public and, particularly, employers. Consistent with the model of strong state leadership with local flexibility, the state believes that the most effective marketing will be conducted at the local level. To support local marketing efforts, the state is planning to prepare marketing materials on a statewide basis. However, progress in developing marketing materials was delayed due to an unexpected loss of communications staff within DILHR and the omnipresence of more pressing priorities among other DILHR One-Stop staff. As a result of these factors, One-Stop marketing efforts — however crucial — made little headway during the first year of the implementation grant. State plans call for increased marketing activities during the second year, as more local One-Stop systems become more widespread.

Numerous other statewide initiatives — such as the state's welfare reform proposal and the School-to-Work initiative — led other DILHR divisions and other agencies and departments to move forward with their own workforce development marketing plans, which would have resulted in parallel marketing efforts to employers and workers. Recognizing the importance of a coordinated marketing effort for the

One-Stop system, an Interagency Guidance Team on Marketing was formed and, at the time of the site visit, the Marketing Team was in the process of securing a marketing consultant so that all of the One-Stop partner agencies and programs could focus on marketing the workforce development system as a whole. A statewide workforce development marketing plan was expected by March 1, 1996.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

The state of Wisconsin is clearly moving forward rapidly in its attempts to implement a One-Stop service delivery system. Rather than phasing in One-Stop planning and implementation a few local areas at a time, the state is moving forward on the development of an extended network of 62 Job Center sites simultaneously. Progress is being made in numerous areas, from cultivating an extensive range of state and local partnerships, to broad-based customer research. It is also apparent, however, that the state is behind its initial proposed timetable in several areas. For instance, the two primary information technology projects are both behind schedule, accounting, in part, for the level of underexpenditure of the implementation grant. In addition, implementation of DOL's Cost Allocation TAG has been pushed back, as have final recommendations on local governance structural arrangements. The state's original objective of having all local sites meet the *Job Center Standards* was originally scheduled to be achieved by December 1997. Achievement of this objective has now been scheduled for June 1998. The delay in many areas is probably something to be expected, given the massive organizational changes that are occurring at the state level among the One-Stop partner agencies. Such large-scale organizational change often takes longer than key actors initially expect, in part because much takes place that was not, and probably could not, have been anticipated.

INFLUENCES ON STATE DESIGN

Notwithstanding the key contextual factors mentioned in the first section of this profile, other influences have also affected One-Stop design, implementation, and progress in the state of Wisconsin. Wisconsin has a long history of collaboration and years of experimentation with precursors of the One-Stop initiative that have served the state well in its present efforts. The substantial involvement of numerous state agencies and local-level partners has clearly supported statewide efforts and helped to establish broad-based commitment for the consolidation of workforce development programs and services.

Another primary factor that has facilitated One-Stop progress and implementation is Wisconsin's strong economy. Low unemployment and widespread labor shortages have created a climate conducive to experimentation and heavy employer involvement. For example, the current job search assistance practice of making employer job orders available to the general public (i.e., unsuppressed job orders through JobNet) and minimizing applicant pre-screening may not be as acceptable to employers when the job market is not as tight.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

In summary, the Wisconson approach to One-Stop design and implementation is characterized by several features, including: (1) strong state leadership to create a coordinated infrastructure and guide the development of local One-Stop systems, with substantial room for local variation in the organization, design, and delivery of One-Stop services; (2) a planned strong integration of welfare-to-work initiatives into the One-Stop system; (3) a vision of tiered services offering Wisconsin residents a range from self-service delivery, to guided services, to case managed services; (4) an approach to One-Stop service delivery that currently emphasizes coordination among disparate funding streams, but which may move rapidly toward integration of services after federal block grant legislation is passed; (5) a strong interest in gaining active employer involvement in One-Stop services and basing system design on ongoing measurements of customer needs and desires; and (6) an organizational structure that emphasizes a consortium of equal agency partners and structures for interagency participation in planning and governance at both the state and local levels.

Wisconsin offers many lessons and, given the benefit of hindsight, perhaps much that would have been done differently. One of the most difficult lessons learned involves the case of local governance. It is widely accepted that the ideal situation would have been to design local governing structures in advance of initial One-Stop planning and implementation. It is to its advantage that the state has historically enjoyed a substantial level of involvement and commitment across state and local agencies, which will probably serve to ameliorate at least some of the discomfort inherent in the formidable process of establishing local boards.

The involvement of as broad a range of state agencies as possible has been both challenging and facilitative of Wisconsin's progress. Despite different missions, cultures, and perspectives, a focus on common interests has helped partner agencies move beyond their differences to focus on a collective goal. Whereas it takes little

effort to focus on differences (e.g., one agency serves "veterans," another serves "individuals with disabilities," yet another serves "economically disadvantaged"), the common focus was the establishment of a system to serve *customers* through a unified system. Although working with so many different partners continues to offer many challenges, this common focus has emerged as the foundation for agency rapport and the initiation of a team approach.

The state of Wisconsin is still struggling with developing its One-Stop system and will probably continue to do so. Despite undeniable progress, it is in a formative stage of development. Perhaps the experience of Wisconsin, well-known as a leader in these efforts, is instructive in that it cautions various stakeholders to temper expectations with the unmistakable reality that cultural change is a long-term process.